





LOUISVILLE JOURNAL, PRENTICE, HENDERSON, & OSBORNE

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1866.

The New York Herald lately published an extraordinary article entitled "Congress and the South—A Short Plan for a Decisive Settlement." The plan is not new, for it has been advanced in other radical quarters, but the Herald presents it with uncommon boldness, and several leading radical organs endorse what that notorious paper says upon the subject.

The Herald and the other organs referred to advise Congress, if the States which succeed in the rejection of the constitutional amendment, to consult them no further, to pay no respect to their views or wishes, but to erase, blot out, obliterate their State Governments, and to erect new ones upon the basis of general amnesty and universal negro suffrage.

If Congress attempt to do this, we shall not be at all surprised. The whole work will of course be unconstitutional, jacobinical, revolutionary, but it is none the less likely to be attempted on that account. The Constitution and the laws weigh nothing in the radical scales now. They are among the impalpables. But let the radicals at Washington do their worst. Let them pile outrage upon outrage, heap atrocity upon atrocity, and they will come all the sooner to their destined end. Hundreds of thousands of honest men, who, up to this time, have voted with them, will quickly and fiercely revolt if any such shocking and horrid policy toward the South as that suggested shall be executed or attempted by the legislative department of the Federal Government. Unquestionably a large majority of the present Congress are men of this sort, and they will not permit themselves to be used as a means to perpetrate, yet a great many will refuse—woud break up and destroy the radical party by their refusal will refuse. Not all, not nearly all, who have voted with the radicals, have sold themselves to the radical view.

It is of no sort of consequence that three or four papers in the South favor the adoption of negro suffrage as a means of getting their section back into its old position in the Union. Where one Southern paper supports the loathsome policy, the press so with individuals—there is no division in public sentiment worth noting. If the odious measure proposed were put to a vote in the South, there would be a mere squeak on one side and a thunder-clap on the other.

The reason suggested by the Mobile Register is, for the Southern people's sake, to adopt negro suffrage is that they are now under Northern military power, subject to all things to Northern domination, and that they may well escape from such a condition by any means possible. But the obvious reply to this is, that whatever the present condition of the South may be, it is a condition forced upon her against her will. She submits to it only because she cannot help herself. She is not responsible for the humiliation she endures. But if she vote to have negro suffrage, the act will be her own. She will be disgraced not only with her own consent but by herself.

And it is only by herself that the South can be disgraced. She may be oppressed and ground down by superior power, freedom of speech and of action may be denied her, her life may be almost crushed out of her, and yet she may do herself proudly in her own eyes, bearing with stoical philosophy what she cannot avert or cast from her, but sternly refusing and disdaining to be made an agent for the infliction of wrongs upon herself, she will keep her self-respect and the respect of mankind. And self-respect is the basis of all material property worth achieving or seeking.

Everywhere, before the late elections, the radicals strongly assured the country, that if they should succeed, the path before them would be plain and smooth, that everything would be considered as settled, and that there would be no doubts, difficulties, or perplexities whatever in regard to the future. Well, they succeeded—succeeded, as they say, beyond their expectations. But is anything settled? Is the future clear? Can any one tell what is to be? Is the constitutional amendment a fixed fact? Is it certain or even probable that the negroes of the South are to vote? Is it any more probable since the elections than it was before? Or is the President's impeachment any more likely now than it was two months ago?

The radicals are as much in the dark as to what is to occur as they ever were. They are conscious of being "all at sea." And they have neither chart nor compass. They are wildly questioning themselves and each other and their opponents. They ask—"What will President Johnson do?" "What will the Southern States do?" "What will the Congress do?" They insist on the constitutional amendment or put themselves upon the ground of Southern negro suffrage—or what? They put these and a thousand other questions, and can get no satisfactory answers. They follow different leaders, and their leaders lead in diverse directions. Their plans are numberless, and each has its noisy and uncompromising advocates. The party's head or rather its heads are turned like that of a man in a can-can. It doesn't know one point of the compass from another. It can't tell the North Star from a Jack-o'-lantern.

The radical organs protest that the people of the South have no constitutional rights whatever. They swear that men guilty of perjury, treason, and rebellion, can have no shadow of right or claim to take part in any affairs of government. But a man, under our Constitution and laws, is not excluded for crime from the exercise of his old rights until convicted of the crime. Have the Southern people been convicted? Have any of them had trials? Have they even a prospect of trials?

No. And they can't properly be tried for their participation in the rebellion. The abandonment of the purpose to try, to convict, and to punish is a complete renunciation in their former rights, and radicals violate the national faith in seeking to impose disabilities now that are retroactive in their nature.

Many of the radical leaders strongly oppose the adjustment of political affairs upon the basis of impartial suffrage and general amnesty. Upon that point at least, the radical leaders and the conservatives are together.

The Cincinnati Commercial cites some strong points to prove that citizens of the United States going to Mexico to join the Liberal cause are not favorably received by the Mexican Government. Indeed this is admitted by the Rio Grande Courier, published at Brownsville, Texas, although that paper is strongly in favor of American interference for the Liberals. It is said that our people who emigrate to join in the military service are regarded with suspicion, and that such of them as have volunteered are nearly treated and not paid at all. The Brownsville paper tells us that there are hundreds of young Americans now in that city and vicinity who have gone there from the States with the impression that the Liberals would gladly welcome them, and put them in the way of earning an honorable distinction in the Mexican service, but have been disappointed and are roaming about in a very destitute condition, and driven almost to desperation.

It is stated, indeed, that the hatred which the Mexicans feel for the French invaders is brotherly kindness compared to the malignant hostility they feel for the Yankees. We don't suppose, however, that this feeling, whether it be hate or love, will have any great influence upon Federal movements. If it intervene, it will be less for Mexico's sake than for our own. But the Mexican antipathy toward our people, if it exists, is a good and conclusive reason why individuals should not go to Mexico upon their own responsibility, either to fight or to do anything else.

Mr. Stokes of Tennessee, in a speech the other evening at Nashville, advocated the enfranchisement of the negroes and the continued denial of the right of suffrage to white men. Such persons must wish that they themselves were negroes, and the public join heartily in the wish. Nigger-souls should be the tenants of nigger-bodies.

The editor of the Chicago Times finds, that, in the negro suffrage business, he has been dancing a regular break-down.

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